**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS**:

1.    A method of serving text-based data messages to a caller identification system in a telecommunications network; said method comprising:

     receiving a data packet comprising message data and a header field containing source-specific information identifying a source of said data packet;

     identifying one or more intended recipients of said data packet;

     overwriting said source-specific information in said header field with said message data; and

     forwarding said data packet to said one or more intended recipients in accordance with said identifying.

2.    The method of claim 1 further comprising selectively translating said data packet into a protocol recognized by said one or more intended recipients, and wherein said forwarding is further in accordance with said translating.

3.    The method of claim 1 further comprising :

     determining whether receipt notification has been requested by said source; and

     responsive to said determining, selectively repeating said forwarding.

4.    The method of claim 1 wherein said receiving and said identifying include parsing at least part of said data packet.

5.    The method of claim 1 further comprising displaying said message data on a caller identification system display associated with each of said one or more intended recipients.

6.    The method of claim 1 wherein at least part of said telecommunications network is operative in accordance with Session Initiation Protocol.

7.    A message system serving text-based data messages to a caller identification system in a telecommunications network; said message system comprising:

     a message receiver operative to receive a data packet comprising message data and a header field containing source-specific information identifying a source of said data packet;

a header field modifier operative to overwrite said source-specific information in said header field with said message data; and

a message router operative to route said data packet, modified by said header field modifier, to one or more intended recipients.

8. The message system of claim 7 wherein said message receiver, said header field modifier, and said message router are incorporated into a network access device.

9. The message system of claim 7 wherein said message receiver, said header field modifier, and said message router are incorporated into a computer server.

10. The message system of claim 7 further comprising a protocol translator operative to translate said data packet into a protocol recognized by said one or more intended recipients.

11. The message system of claim 10 wherein said protocol translator is an integrated access device.

12. The message system of claim 10 wherein said protocol translator allows Session Initiation Protocol data packets to be translated into a protocol recognized by a public-switched telephone network device.

13. A computer-readable medium encoded with data and computer executable instructions for serving text-based data messages to a caller identification system in a telecommunications network; the data and instructions causing an apparatus executing the instructions to:

identify a data packet comprising message data and a header field containing source-specific information identifying a source of said data packet;

create a modified data packet wherein said source-specific information in said header field is overwritten with said message data; and

forward said modified data packet to one or more intended recipients.

14.     The computer-readable medium of claim 13 further encoded with data and instructions, further causing an apparatus to translate said modified data packet into a protocol recognized by said one or more intended recipients.

15.     The computer-readable medium of claim 13 further encoded with data and instructions, further causing an apparatus to:

        determine whether receipt notification has been requested by said source; and

        repetitively forward said modified data packet to selected ones of said one or more intended recipients until receipt notification from each of said one or more intended recipient is received by said apparatus.

16.     The computer-readable medium of claim 15 further encoded with data and instructions, further causing an apparatus to transmit a receipt confirmation to said source.

17.     A method of serving text-based data messages; said method comprising:

        providing a data packet comprising message data, a source header field containing source-specific information related to a source of said data packet, and a recipient header field containing recipient-specific information related to one or more intended recipients of said data packet;

        overwriting said source-specific information with said message data;

        creating a modified data packet in accordance with said overwriting; and

        forwarding said modified data packet in accordance with said recipient-specific information.

18.     The method of claim 17 further comprising translating said modified data packet into a protocol recognized by said one or more intended recipients.

19.     The method of claim 17 further comprising selectively repeating said forwarding to ones of said one or more intended recipients.

20.     The method of claim 19 further comprising:

determining whether each of said one or more intended recipients has received said modified data packet; and

terminating said selectively repeating in accordance with said determining.

5    21.    The method of claim 17 further comprising displaying said message data on a caller identification system display associated with each of said one or more intended recipients.

22.    The method of claim 17 wherein at least part of said telecommunications network is operative in accordance with Session Initiation Protocol.

10   23.    A communications network system comprising:

a message source operative to compose and to transmit a data packet comprising message data and a header field containing source-specific information identifying said message source;

one or more intended recipients operative to receive said data packet;

15    each of said one or more intended recipients having an associated display for displaying information in said header field;

a message processor operative to create a modified data packet wherein said source-specific information in said header field is overwritten with said message data; and

20    a message router operative to route said modified data packet to said one or more intended recipients.

24.    The network system of claim 23 wherein said message source, said message processor, and said message router are incorporated into a network access device.

25   25.    The network system of claim 23 wherein said message source, said message processor, and said message router are incorporated into a computer server.

26.    The network system of claim 23 further comprising a protocol translator operative to translate said modified data packet into a protocol recognized by said one or more intended recipients.

27. The message system of claim 26 wherein said protocol translator is an integrated access device.

28. The message system of claim 26 wherein said protocol translator allows Session Initiation Protocol data packets to be translated into a protocol recognized by a public-switched telephone network device.

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